

1-9-1869

Letter from Anne Whitney, Rome, Italy, 1869 January 9

Anne Whitney

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Recommended Citation

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Rome - 17 Jan 7-1849. - 1

My dear Sarah & Home.

I have just-learned that the Coliseum covers 5 acres. Also that Rome contains 200 000 Romans- also that Naples is 500 000 strong- & I think these interesting facts will be safer in yr. keeping than in mine. Miss Merrill returned from Naples Thurs. evng. & she gives us such a brilliant picture of that City & its belongings- sea, islands, country, ruins & all that we turn over the subject in many ways thinking how we may go there. What is left us but to make money? Then again our imaginations have been inflamed with pictures of Egypt- of think that we are within a few days of the Pyramids-! Last week I rec^d a letter from Eli. Now in wh. he says the 3 days he had then had in Egypt- had been more to him than all the 3 years of his European travel. He wrote from Cairo after having ascended the great Pyramid at Gizeh. The beauty of the desert- studded with its islands of wonderful green & its palm-groves- stretching away like the sea- with its caravans of laden camels- & the peculiar beauty of human kind there- living bronze he calls them, all seem profoundly to have impressed him. He will be in Rome he

thinks in March or April. As it takes
60 days to go up the Nile alone I don't see
how he can go to Syria & return bef. April.
Murray computes the expense of a European
tour including Egypt & Syria to be accom-
plished in one year & at first-class
prices, with liberal expenditure, at
~~2,500~~ \$ - \$ 2,500 - See what you
can do with yr. little savings of 3 or 4
years! I cannot understand why the
Shamons did not go East - as I know it
was a part of their plan; they have said
nothing about it. You have heard of
the dif^{ce} between the Eng. & America
in the matter of frankness as to ~~money~~
It is altogether true that there is such
a dif^{ce} we have scarcely met an Eng-
lisher who did not allude to their want
of means to do this or that - An Amer-
ican never does, except in some case where it
is manifest - to all the world that his
means are unlimited. The Eng. think
our people immensely wealthy. 2 or 3
have said to me - "but the Americans
are so very rich!" Their reputation for
wealth comes mainly from their more
generous expenditure. The Eng. save
to keep the estate together & hand it

down to their children - Our people have
a better time - & they seem to be tolerably
liked wherever they go - except where they
take on airs & despise their own Country.
They are remarked upon for their beauty
& the richness & good taste of their dress -
& certainly in the latter respect our
eng. consins show poorly beside them.
They are astonishing sometimes in their
prowdness & the femme de chambre
air of their accoutrements.

Miss Dole
who called yesterday with Miss Miller
with whom she has taken up her abode
gave me a dif^t idea of the trouble
of the Porter family than I had
rec^d from yr. letter - She says Mr.
Porter talked very freely to them about
his affairs - said he had lost thro. the
person you spoke of \$ 30,000 wh. in
her opinion was not for him so very
great a loss, inasmuch as he co. not
but have a large property left; said
that he talked jocosely of leaving his
wife a poor woman &c. & this, not
long bef. She left home. Said that
his grandchildren's having wd. be cur-
tailed by his losses, but that his
immediate family wd. suffer no in-
convenience.

Miss Dole says his spirits were
excellent - & Maryannes also. This
improved acct. of affairs there was
balm to my mind - for I had rec'd.
no mitigation of the dolorful acctal
you sent last summer, wh left
me with a distressing sense of some
still more dreadful calamity impending.
I had begun to think of our good old
friend as in the same category with
Agathus or whatever classic wretch
it was most pursued by fate; &
feel a mighty sense of relief, as you
must too to learn his later estimate
of his troubles. I dare say when
a person wakes up suddenly & sees a
good slice of his property in the act
of sliding, he as good as sees it all gone.
Last evng. after taking Mrs Becker
& daughter according to promise to see
Miss Platts & her studio they took
me to drive out to the villa Borghese
& home over the Pincio in the splendor
of such a sunset as wd. be memorable
on meteorus hill. I said how I shd
like to have you & all friends see Rome
for the 1st time under such an aspect
coming in as we did by the Porta del
Popolo - as they used to enter before the

bef. the railroad was built. The
fields in the Borghese grounds were covered
with flowers. The fountains & the brook
overflowed as usual. & the west ^{from the} sky
sent swins of golden light flooding fields
& villa - lighting the tops of the stone pines
& lighting the dome of St. Peter's as
we saw it - from the Pincio against such a
back ground was simply, incomprehensible in
its grandeur.

Jan 7-21. The letter wh. comes tonight - an-
nouncing the failure of one of mine, I
know not which - doesn't say that you
are all well, but I ascribe the omission
to the feeling of curiosity & anxiety wh. pos-
sessed you as to the fate of that vagabond
missive. I trust yr luck is proof against
delaying & missing steamers & that the
letter will show up better late than
never as it did the other time. Adm
say 'Thank you' dear Sarah for her letter
since you spoke of Katy not being well
you have not spoken about her & I
wish I might hear. In the last letter of
this yr wrote of Mr. Allen's death
of the stroke upon her nerves that he
labors at Mrs. Allen's sad case. There
all is right now. Looki' care of her
nervousness? I have just - betrayed
me that the missing letter is the one

in wh. I told you of my heart-felt
joy & satisfaction in the beautiful home
group wh. came to me thro some private
hands sent from Rome by the Germans.
The latter have not probably arrived
in Rom. so I have not heard of or seen
them. I am very sorry if that letter
has missed - & will not believe it has
unless you next asserts it.

Sat. Evng. Jan 7. 23. Yesterday Mrs.
Packer & daughter took us Abby & me
in her carriage out to the Pamphylia
Doria. The villa of the Doria's is a princely
family of Rome - Twice a week the grounds
are thrown open to the public - wh drives
a walk thro at pleasure. The most
beautiful feature of the place is the
frequent groves of stone pines wh. in
the distance look like palms. The
fields were covered with flowers. Pansies,
violets & a kind of anemone that I never
saw before. The air was chill - but
we were quite unprepared for to see the
icicles wh. skirted some of the lovely
old fountains. This morning there
was actually frost on our windows
a sight we did not see all last winter.
I thought of you. Knowing how your fingers
must ache in the sharp mornings
at home - & you have not once told
assured me dear Sarah that you

have sought comfort down stairs in the
north room. It is dreadful & think that
you will tempt Providence by sleeping
under that skylight. You never will
have warm hands & feet until you
cease to spend yourself in that way.

With the cold weather colds & rheuma-
tism has reappeared. & we have been saying
dearest Sarah that your greater liability
to that complaint in the other seasons
is owing probably to the greater damp-
ness wh. prevails then - Humidity has
reigned ever since last winter until
this cool snap, & I feel sure Asthma
is ascribable to it. I heartily wish
you wd. get Mr. Barnard to throw
out the trees about our house - the
incessant shade breeds dampness &
that disease. Whenever the motion
of air is impeded, there is room for
demons to congregate.

Helena M. Trevelyan
telling us of the charge she took for
one year at Mr. Herod's infant re-
quest of his rich ward young Sears.
She had lived with him at Andover
& found him a trial - not that he was
wanting in good natural qualities but
wanting in good nature. His family
who is one of the lions of the kind that

J. Parker, used to allude to with such
quits sometimes, had made him horribly
deceitful - & at the last acct, he was
developing into knavery. The old man
was so miserly that he died in a cold
room rather than pay the price charged
for a warm one - & the boy shows a
poor man's aptitude for sharp bargains
inasmuch that when an old bell in
Andover was broken up & the other
boys possessed themselves of pieces
of it as relics - he sold his for old
copper. What a mournful thing
it is that property shd. be accumulated
for such a sorry little wretch - but
the fault is not his - his guardian
is a fool -

Samlr Thomson called at
the studio yesterday - some ladies
with him - & as his art. reputation
is good - for will be glad to know that
he heartily admired the things he
found. He also did an English sculpture
by the name of Bell who also crit-
icised my work - & with a knowledge
& trained understanding such
as I have found in no other person.
I have just got my name on my
door & begin to have a few visitors

Ady has gone out to take 7 of
the Millions. I declined to go even
to see the grounds that Reman.
I meant to do so (2 or 3 parties
about I might have said). I must
certainly be objected to - on the same
score - & I shd. not travel up and
down a month to do so. He called at
Dr. Gould's this P.M. He is un-
usually busy - the City Temple & the
Church the painter is living not far
from us in Islington - have not seen
him - he is shy, they say, & does not
go into company - he knows instinctively
perhaps what company is in Rome
means - little profit & much wear.
Still there will always bring a
good many interesting people here.
Ady has been photographing - I will
send you one in my next. They
have not yet come home.

Thank God for your continued good
health - May the days that now
necessitate in length bring to you dear
mother father & all increasing
good - Do not be anxious over
a missing letter - must I assure
you again that we shall write

always believing that Pope & we
shall do their several duties.
I remember that your missing letter
the other time was followed by one
on my side & mine never turned up.
I hope to hear in my next that all
is right - Best love to all. I cannot
express all that my heart wishes for
you - Good night - & my beloved
sister sleep warm & believe that
throughout there what blessing
of warmth or friendly air I have
here with you

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This page is for my dear friend
who I suppose there is no good reason
why you shd. not read it & hear it.
I wish to say that the wonderfully
symmetrical & rhythmical character
of my act. current - with I suppose
you see, advances that document
into the sphere of high art. I must
own up that I gazed for some
minutes in a sort of stupid astonish-
at the concluding periods not be-
able to come now or when I had
managed a summer's work from
the mines to the plus side of the
scale. You must not think it strange
that I was slow, tho. with a former
generous to help me - for I get
at the sense of figures however
by a big out of labor & a
found concentration. Your loving
brotherliness is ever the same & I
am in heart in spirit, of the nature
of our engagements & occasionally
I cannot say that I expect to meet
my generous with what I can meet
come to my original income. My story
is new. People have not yet found
their way to it - & if I shd. turn
my attention to selling with the

of some of my brethren here. I shall have
little life left for the Study wh. is the
chief thing while I remain in Rome.
Graciously I am reminded of my two
marble mistakes. & I am not without
for the experience since it saves me
from any like error here. I am happy
in the consciousness of improvement -
one of the results too perhaps of good
health. A part of the adjoined
income you generously offer I
may want. It will enable me to do
some summer travelling as a part of
my business here - wh. I shall be very
glad of. & So I give you heart felt
thanks. One of my warm wishes is
that I might do something for Genl
& Bethend Mother & all the true
parents at home who have given me
so much - something as a commendation
with their gifts to me. I think it is with
some such undefined hope that makes
easier to live away so long from you
& all. Thanks to Carrie for her re-
membrances. She must know how to take
us there out of my letters home & I best
to you & all.